

April, 2005

Volume 1, Issue 8

ARF Update



Special Interest Articles:

- 2005 Cornhusker State Games
- National TV Turnoff Week is April 25-May 1!
- New activities from VERB
- Brain Breaks/ Interdisciplinary Activities

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ARF NEWS

Newly Revised ARF Promotional Materials Available

Did you have a great time with ARF this year? Want to tell your friends and colleagues about it? Brochures and posters for the 2005-2006 ARF Movement will be available on the web site www.hhss.ne.gov/cvh by April 15.

Help us get the word to schools, youth and faith organizations, community members and coalitions, families, recreation programs and anyone else who is interested in fighting the physical inactivity epidemic in our state!

Girls on the Run Program Pilots New ARF Materials

ARF has partnered with a growing national youth activity program to pilot newly designed tools. Girls on the Run (GOTR) is a non-profit organization that encourages preteen girls to develop self-respect and healthy lifestyles through running. GOTR teams meet twice a week for eight weeks in the fall and spring to train for a non-competitive 5K race at the end of the season.

Training for a 5K is a challenge, especially when mandatory training is only held twice a week. GOTR's partnership with

ARF will encourage participants to add a Friday workout to their routine and will reward them for doing so!

As part of this special partnership effort, GOTR coaches will pilot a preliminary version of the new ARF Activity Tracker (replaces point cards), Active Kids Cards (replace journal books), and revised promotional materials.

The Nebraska Chapter of GOTR is currently active in the Lincoln and Omaha communities and is hoping to expand to other locations across the state. For more information visit: www.girlsontherun.org/

Point Cards Due

ARF Incentive Period 5 ends on Friday, April 8. Point cards must be postmarked no later than Friday, April 15. This will be the last time you need to collect point cards. Please have youth track their activity as they normally would for the last four weeks of ARF.

Send only evaluation forms to obtain the final incentive prize for each participant. Postmark evaluation forms NO LATER than May 13 to be eligible for incentives. A more detailed reminder on evaluations will be included in the May newsletter.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Volley Bash to Benefit Nebraska Sports Council (NSC)

A junior volleyball tournament to benefit the NSC, sponsor of the Cornhusker State Games and N-Lighten Nebraska, will be held May 21-22, 2005 at Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln.

The tournament will feature nine age groups. Youth 10-18 years are eligible to play- and are guaranteed 8 games! Entry forms can be downloaded from the State Games site: www.cornhuskerstategames.com



2005 Cornhusker State Games

The 2005 Cornhusker State Games will be held **July 9-17** in Lincoln with 57 sports from Adventure Race to Wrestling. Of special interest is the annual pre-games torch run which will transverse the state between May 23 and June 17.

Online registration begins **April 1**. To see the sports calendar and catch up on all the news of the Nebraska Sports Council, check out the 'all-new' NSC newsletter, *The Torch Report*, online.



...cont **WHAT'S HAPPENING?**

Celebrate National Public Health Week (NPHW)



April 4-10, 2005

The theme of this year's celebration is "Prevent, Protect and Plan" and the focus will be on empowering Americans to live stronger, longer! During NPHW, the three Ps in adding more healthy years to life will be promoted: Prevent, Protect and Plan. For a wealth of information and free planning tools, log on to www.apha.org/

10th Annual National Kick Butts Day

On **April 13, 2005**, thousands of youth in every state and around the world will STAND OUT... SPEAK UP... and SEIZE CONTROL in the fight against Big Tobacco. Kick Butts Day (KBD) is a Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids' annual celebration of youth advocacy, leadership and activism.

For information on how to get involved and utilize the jam-packed Activity Guide long onto:

www.kickbuttsday.org.

The guide is also a great year-round resource.

National Dance Week April 22-May 1, 2005

Heighten awareness for Dance and its contributions to our culture. For resources to incorporate dance awareness into your setting, log on to www.nationaldanceweek.org

TV Turn-off Week April 25-May 1

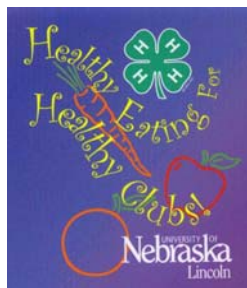
Did you know that on an average school day Nebraska youth spend more than 3 ½ hours of their "free time" in front of a screen? An average American youth spends more time per year in front of the television (1,023 hours) than in school (900 hours)!

What more reason do you need to participate in TV Turnoff Week being held April 25-May 1? For seven days, people across the nation and world will be turning off their televisions to find that life can be more rewarding and fulfilling when they "do more and watch less."

How can you incorporate this world-wide initiative in your setting? Spreading the word to the community, providing screen-free activity ideas, and arranging fun events are just of a few of the ways you can get involved.

Find several activity ideas in the "Physical Activity Ideas" section of this newsletter!

For more ideas and tools, log on to: www.tvturnoff.org



Nebraska 4-H Launches "Healthy Eating for Healthy Clubs"

Great job to Nebraska 4-H for making physical activity and healthy eating a part of your curriculum!

To complement the release of two new health conscious projects, *Youth In Motion* and *Fast Foods*, the new "Healthy Eating for Healthy Clubs" initiative has been launched to join all 4-H members in a common goal to lead healthier lifestyles.

This statewide initiative is being launched with the goal of teaching 4-H members more about physical activity and healthy eating choices while having fun!

Program developers have designed a "Healthy Eating for Healthy Clubs Checklist" that 4-H members will review and fill out at each meeting. The checklist covers topics such as service projects, snack suggestions, physical activity ideas. Members will record what they have done in these different areas for physical activity and nutrition for themselves and their communities.

For more information and to discover how you can be involved, visit: <http://4h.unl.edu>

CDC Begins Study

The Physical Activity and Health Branch of the CDC will be investigating the role of school-based physical activity on indicators of academic performance among elementary school children.

This three-year project involves three studies of a cross-sectional sample of approximately 3000 Texas elementary schools.

The first study is examining the effect of a coordinated school health program (including enhanced physical education) on academic performance.

The second study is examining the effect of an enhanced physical activity program on standardized test scores in elementary schools.

The third study will use data collected at various points in time from study two to assess the effect of physical activity on psychological, behavioral, and academic factors.

Child Magazine Identifies 10 Best and Worst States for Fit Kids

A recent study released in Child Magazine ranks Nebraska as one of the worst 10 states in which to raise a fit kid. Go to www.child.com and look under "Kids" to read the full report. Several factors (some controversial) were considered including mandated school fitness policies, playground availability, and number of fast-food restaurants. See if you agree with the experts' ranking.

...cont **WHAT'S HAPPENING?**

May is National Physical Activity Month – Start Planning Now!

National PE Day® is celebrated by schools and communities nationwide in a show of support for physical education and the positive role it plays in fighting the childhood obesity epidemic and helping children lead active, healthy lifestyles. PE4life is encouraging everyone across the country to celebrate the importance and value of this core subject!

PE teachers are being encouraged to let the creative juices flow by designing field day activities for schools. See the ARF Manual for ideas or contact arf@hhss.ne.gov For more information, log on to www.PE4life.org.

Be a Part of “World’s Largest Exercise Class” in May



Can you imagine millions of children from all 50 states and over 50 countries exercising together on the same day at the same time? The concept behind project All

Children Exercise Simultaneously (ACES) is to create the “world’s largest exercise class”. The 17th annual global event will occur at **10 AM local time, Wednesday, May 4, 2005.**

Due to the mass participation of this event, there is plenty of room for flexibility concerning the start time of Project ACES. There is no specific routine to follow, just have the children do some form of exercise at 10 AM.

Feel free to be as creative as you would like. Many schools choose to invite local celebrities to the event and play music to accompany the activities. Organizers of local events can choose to get the whole school involved, or just selected classes. The majority of schools will get the entire school population outside onto a play field, put on music, and have everyone in the school have some fun by moving and exercising together.

The program has been growing in leaps and bounds. The first year of Project ACES in 1989 had 240,000 children participate worldwide. In the year 2003, the state of Michigan alone had over 400,000 participants. ACES official web site is www.projectaces.com

Get the Word Out About Your Activities!

If you plan to participate in any of the exciting events listed above, **let us know what is going on** and we will highlight it in the May’s ARF update. We have **posters** for

anyone who submits information! Contact arf@hhss.ne.gov.

The **USDA** also wants to know if there are any Nebraska schools planning celebrations related to nutrition and physical activity in April or May this year. Activities for TV Turnoff Week, ACE’s Day, National Physical Activity Month and National Physical Education Day would be a great fit!

The model replacing the Food Guide Pyramid will be released soon, and the USDA staff is looking for places to promote this exciting model. Maybe it could be at YOUR event.

Send your event information to: Connie Stefkovich, R.D., Administrator, Nutrition Services, NDE cstefkov@nde.state.ne.us

Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005: Recommendations for Physical Activity

Engage in regular physical activity and reduce sedentary activities to promote health, psychological well being, and a healthy body weight.

- To reduce the risk of chronic disease: Engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most days of the week.
- For greater health benefits, engage in physical activity of more vigorous intensity or longer duration.

- To help manage body weight: Engage in approximately 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity activity on most days of the week while not exceeding caloric intake requirements.
- To sustain weight loss in adulthood: Participate in at least 60 to 90 minutes of daily moderate-intensity physical activity while not exceeding caloric intake requirements.
- Achieve physical fitness by including cardiovascular conditioning, stretching exercises for flexibility, and resistance exercises or calisthenics for muscle strength and endurance.

For more information, see www.healthierus.gov/

Save the Date!

Experience the newest trends and learn about late-breaking research and application in physical activity, physical education, and nutrition endeavors happening across Nebraska and the nation. Attend the NAHPERD and Action for Healthy Kids Conference October 19-20 at the University of Nebraska-Kearney. Don’t miss it! A conference registration form can be downloaded at

www.nebrwesleyan.edu/groups/nahperd



Physical Activity Idea Corner

Surviving TV Turnoff Week!

Turning off the one, two, or more television sets in your house may seem like a daunting task and chances are your kids (and spouse) will be less than excited about missing their favorite programs.

The key to surviving this week-long effort is to have so much fun that your family forgets about the "sacrifice" they are making. Here are some ideas to fill those extra hours that have opened up.

Plan a Nature Hike

Earth Day is April 22- what a great precursor to TV Turnoff Week! Keep in the spirit by getting in touch with the great outdoors during this beautiful spring season! The ARF Activity Guide features a "How to Do" card on hiking in the physical activity section. A few highlights:

- Hiking is a very inexpensive activity, but you do need to make sure you have a good pair of shoes and thick socks.
- Depending on the length of the hike, you may want to take along some type of pack to carry a set of simple supplies including sunscreen, water, nutritious snacks, a first-aid kit, and a compass.
- Don't go too far too soon. For your first

hike, choose a safe, well-marked trail that doesn't have too many steep climbs. You don't want to get too tired too early and not make it back! As you become more experienced, choose more challenging courses.

Hiking resources:

American Hiking Society
www.AmericanHiking.org

Nebraska Game & Parks Trail Guide

www.ngpc.state.ne.us
Click on "Guides" button.

Put a New Twist on an Old Game

Cat & Mouse

Many of you are probably familiar with this popular tag game. Teach your kids a new version that incorporates jump ropes!

Supplies Needed:

This game needs four players. Two players turn the rope and two play the game.

How to Play:

The object of the game is for the "Cat" to tag the "Mouse". The Mouse starts the game by entering the rope on the diagonal, jumping once, and then exiting the rope and running around the rope turner. The mouse re-enters the rope on the diagonal and exits again running around the other rope turner (Figure "8"). The Cat may enter the rope after the Mouse has completed one jump. The

Cat chases the Mouse following the same figure "8" trail. The Cat and the Mouse must jump once each time they enter the rope.

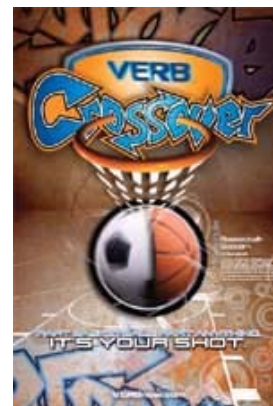
The Mouse is "out" if she misses jumping the rope or is caught by the Cat. Once the Mouse is "out", she'll take the place of one rope turner and that person becomes the new Cat. The old Cat becomes the new Mouse and a new chase begins.

To increase the difficulty of this game, use two ropes and play "Double Dutch". To decrease the difficulty, have the participants jump over a jump rope that is lying on the floor. The rope can still be moving- wiggle it like a snake!
- Modified from
www.KidWizard.com

Get Your VERB On!

VERB at CDC has a new tool for youth in grades 4-8 that will get them off the couch and onto the court- Cross basketball with other sports and activities, and what do you get? **VERB Crossover for Schools**, that's what! This kit has all-new game ideas, activity trackers, and promotional tools. Educators can apply for a **\$1000 grant** to support their school's P.E. program. Check out www.cdc.gov/youthcampaign/ and click on "download VERB materials" for more information.

A few of the new game ideas are highlighted in the next column.



Basketball+Badminton = Birdbasket Ball

Don't be a birdbrain, basketball's a whole new game when using a racket and birdie! Volley with your teammates, avoiding interference from opponents' rackets. Keep it under control and you'll shoot the birdie through the hoop for the regulation 2 points.

Basketball + Hoop = Hoop It Up

Your ball is a basketball, your basket is a hoop that moves. Have two players hold the hoop flat, like the rim of a basket. You can't control these human hoops. They run around the court as much as you do! If you can get close enough, shoot through the hoop to score.

Basketball + Flying Disk = Basket Disk

Grab a disk and head to the court. Designate certain spots two-, three-, and four-point zones. Let the disk soar and hit the basket, from any of these zones to earn the same number of points. Defensive blocks and stealing allowed.

Physical Activity Idea Corner (cont.)

Adaptive Activity Blind Man's Soccer

Promotes partner cooperation and disability awareness.

OBJECTIVE:

Students will practice giving and following directions as they experience the loss of the sense of sight. Trust will be important in this interesting activity.

COGNITIVE LINK:

Following directions is an important skill for all learning situations. Trusting each other is a valuable social and lifetime skill. Being aware of the power of our senses in learning is strengthened when one sense, sight, is taken away.

EQUIPMENT:

Have a blindfold (i.e. a bandanna or a grocery sack placed over the head).

ORGANIZATION:

Students choose a partner and start in personal space scattered around the large play area. One partner starts blindfolded. The beanbag is placed at the feet of the blindfolded partner.

ANTICIPATORY SET:

TEACHER'S QUOTE:
"I bet your teacher is always telling you to follow the directions carefully. This game will help you practice giving and following directions. It also challenges you to trust your partner because one partner will be blindfolded and will have to rely on their partner's good directions in order to be successful. How are

your soccer skills? You'll need good kicking and aiming skills as well."

ACTIVITY:

The Teacher gives the signal "go". The partner chooses a target for the blindfolded partner to aim at. The partner begins to give directions to his/her blindfolded partner without touching him/her unless the blindfolded partner is in danger. Directions might be "The beanbag is 2 feet in front of your right toe. Take 2 small steps forward. Kick the beanbag about 10 feet straight ahead. Now take 10 steps forward and to your left. The beanbag is now about 6" you're your right. Turn your right and take one step forward, etc. After the first partner kicks the beanbag to the target, the partners switch places so that both partners have a turn blindfolded.

CLOSURE:

TEACHER'S QUOTE:
"How did it feel to be "blind"? Why did you have to listen so closely to your partner? What did you learn about trust from this activity? Friendships and relationships are built on trust. As you learn to be the best person you can be, remember to trust and follow directions carefully."

- From "Thinking on Your Feet" by Jean Blaydes



Brain Breaks/ Interdisciplinary Activities

Connecting Art & Physical Activity... Juggling Balls

You can make these juggling balls in Art class then use them as a brain break to teach the kids coordination and balance or play with them outside. For instructions on how to juggle and other resources, check out

www.juggling.org/

GRADE LEVEL: 4 - 8

EQUIPMENT:

Birdseed
Funnel
Balloons

ACTIVITY:

- Use a funnel and fill the balloon with the bird seed. This is a slow process.
 - Cut the neck off the balloon and place a second balloon over the hole now you should have a completely covered ball with no birdseed popping out.
 - If you want them to be stronger add another BASE balloon here.
 - With a balloon cut some holes in it with the tips of your scissors and remove the neck of the balloon then open it up and place it over the ball. The color underneath should be showing through the holes and giving it a nice colorful pattern.
 - Repeat this with several layers of balloons and holes adding to the effect and also to the strength.
- Activity featured at www.pelinks4u.org

Movement in the Music Room- Step Clap Kick

SUBJECTS:

Music, Health, Physical Education

GADE LEVEL: 3-8

GENERAL GOAL:

Have students better understand quarter note/rest rhythms.

EQUIPMENT:

Visual representation of quarter note/quarter rest rhythms.

ACTIVITY:

- Show students a simple 4-measure rhythm made up of quarter notes and quarter rests. (Use 4/4 time to start). Do NOT put the notes on the staff, but include some "high" notes (stems down) and some "low" notes (stems up).
- Have the students start out by clapping the rhythm, nodding their heads for the rests.
- The next step is to have them clap high in the air for high notes and clap low by their feet for the low notes, and nod their heads for rests.
- Ask the kids to suggest actions to substitute for hand clapping and nodding, such as stomping feet, jumping, etc. Repeat activity. As the kids get the hang of it, increase the complexity of the rhythm.

- Modified from activity at www.LessonPlansPage.com



Important Dates

April 1

Online registration for Cornhusker State Games begins p.1

April 4-10

National Public Health Week p. 2

April 13

National Kick Butts Day p. 2

April 15

ARF Point Cards Due p. 1

April 22-1

National Dance Week p. 2

April 25-1

National TV Turnoff Week p. 2

May

National Physical Activity Month p. 3

May 4

National P.E. Day p. 3

May 4

ACE's Day p. 3

May 11

N-Lighten Kids Day

For more information, contact:

Michelle Garwood

ARF Coordinator
Phone: 402-471-0505
michelle.garwood@hhss.ne.gov

Physical Activity Ideas (cont.)

Incorporating physical activities into curriculum is a great way to retain knowledge. Find many tried and true curriculum based 'brain-breaks' for a variety of subjects each month at www.pelinks4u.org

Supervised Strength Training is a Safe and Effective Way to Help Battle Youth Inactivity and Obesity

American children are increasingly overweight and one more way to steer them toward an active lifestyle is through strength training. Unfortunately, many long-standing myths and misconceptions have fostered a belief that strength training may be ineffective and potentially unsafe for youngsters.

According to the Youth Strength Training book recently published by the American Council on Exercise, strength training is a safe and effective option for most children age seven and older. Research has clearly and consistently shown that **SUPERVISED** strength training is an extremely safe and beneficial form of physical activity for young people. Youth should be supervised by a **trained and certified instructor**. There has not been a single reported serious injury in all of the prospective studies published on youth strength training. Youngsters who start strength training at an early age tend to have better attitudes toward fitness including improved self-esteem, mental

discipline and socialization skills.

"Although aerobic exercise and eating sensibly are routinely recommended for young children, strength training can also bring benefits of improved musculoskeletal fitness, body composition and injury resistance," said Dr. Cedric Bryant, ACE chief exercise physiologist. "With regard to strength training, it is imperative that children participate in programs that are **designed and supervised by competent health and fitness professionals.**"

The following tips are recommended for a child beginning a strength training routine:

- Begin with two, non-consecutive weight training sessions per week and perform eight to 12 strength exercises that work all of the major muscle groups
- Using controlled movement speed, lift enough weight for 10-15 repetitions per set
- Increase their weight load by five to 10 percent whenever 15 repetitions can be done easily
- Try working with medicine balls and resistance bands in addition to weight machines or weights to add variety to the child's workout.

For more information: www.acefitness.org



Nutrition

USDA's Food & Nutrition Services (FNS) Release Activity Sheets

April's nutrition feature highlights USDA's *Eat Smart Play Hard* campaign. FNS now has new activity sheets for 8-10 year olds that support and encourage healthy eating and physical activity. These entertaining educational tools engage and inform kids using interactive games, puzzles, kid-friendly recipes, jokes and tips.

Ideal for educators, these activity sheets focus on snacking, breakfast, physical activity, and balancing food and play. Use these tools as part of nutrition education sessions in school, child care and recreational programs, and as a take-home project.

Sheets have been attached to this e-mail. They can also be found at www.fns.usda.gov/ Click on FNS and look under "What's New."

What can YOU do with 60 minutes a day?